

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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In Reply To:
6500(923)P

February 26, 2004

EMAIL TRANSMISSION - 03/01/04
Information Bulletin No. MT-2004-044

To: State Management Team

From: State Director

Subject: Montana/Dakotas Biologist Workshop

A biologist workshop will be held the week of March 8-12, 2004. At this meeting we will be updating the biologists on the latest Endangered Species Act and Section 7 consultation issues, reviewing the special status species lists, clarifying the budget processes, learning how to use the latest databases, and coordinating with partners. We are encouraging all biologists, including riparian specialists, to attend this workshop.

The workshop will start Monday afternoon with a session on Oil and Gas with assistance from Jim Albano followed by a session on fire and fuels management with Jim Gray and Katie Baltrusch. The entire workshop is filled with worthwhile information and learning opportunities.

The managers are invited to attend any or all of the sessions and we welcome your input and questions. Please support this workshop by facilitating participation from all biologists and riparian specialists in your field office.

Please direct questions or comments to Roxanne Falise, Gayle Sitter or Aly Piwowar at the Montana State Office.

Signed by: Martin C. Ott

Authenticated by: Merry Prestridge (MT923)

1 Attachment

1-Agenda for Biologist Workshop (4 pp)

Distribution w/ attm.

Asst. FM Havre-1

Asst. FM Glasgow-1

Montana/Dakotas BLM All-Biologist Meeting
Montana State Office – Main Conference Room
March 8-12, 2004

Monday March 8th

1pm – Welcome and Introductions

1:30 Oil and Gas Breakout Group – Jim Albano, Andrea Parrott
Topics and other presenters TBA

3:00 Fire/Fuels Management Breakout Group
- Fire Management Plans: biologists' role, expectations, outcomes – John Thompson, Jim Gray, Katie Baltrusch
- Project Planning: IDT approach, outcomes – Katie Baltrusch, Gayle Sitter
- FO project example – Fred Roberts
- Funding process/Implementation – Jim Gray
- Monitoring: issues and needs – general discussion

4:30 Round Robin: successes in Field Offices - ~10 minutes each

Tuesday March 9th

8:00 Opening Comments - Marty Ott

9:00 All Employee Meeting

10:15 Listing updates – Lou Hanebury, Rob Hazlewood

10:30 Consultation/streamlining: definitions, process, tools, counterpart regulations - Gayle Sitter, Lou Hanebury, Shawn Sartorius

11:45 Backlog consultation update – Gayle Sitter, Katie Baltrusch, Shawn Sartorius

12:00 LUNCH

1:00 Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) MOU – Rob Hazlewood

1:15 MBTA Guidance Discussion - Roxanne Falise, Lou Hanebury, Rob Hazlewood
Outcome – Decide if we need to issue guidance specific to Montana. If yes, develop a task list.

2:45 BREAK

3:00 Land Use Planning: incorporating conservation using proactive and mitigations measures - Katie Baltrusch

4:00 Round Robin cont'd.

Wednesday March 10th

8:00 Northern Great Plains Broadscale Assessment - Bruce Durtsche, Chris Benson

9:00 Northern Great Plains hands-on training – Bruce Durtsche, Chris Benson

10:45 BREAK

11:00 Bats – Sarah LaMarr
Outcome: Decide on follow-up training session. if yes, what topics?, divvy out duties

11:30 Raptor guidelines update – Roxanne Falise

11:45 WHSRN – Fritz Prellwitz

Fish Biology Breakout Session

9:00 Topics include:

- Surveys: stream habitat, fish distribution, reservoirs, amphibians
- GIS needs and databases
- Beavers: pros and cons
- Projects and funding

11:00-12:00 Riparian Database hands-on training – Paul Hansen, Mike Philbin

12:00 LUNCH

1:00 Northern Mixed Grass Conservation Planning Initiative – John Carlson, Aly Piwowar

1:30 Sensitive Species revision overview and discussion – Gayle Sitter, Aly Piwowar

2:00 BPS Overview - Pam Dandrea

2:15 Contracting Overview: Agreements, Task Orders - Mary Clark

2:30 BREAK

2:45 BPS: focus on Wildlife - Roxanne Falise, Aly Piwowar
Topics include themes and funding, PE codes

3:15 Contracting: focus on Wildlife - Roxanne Falise, Jill Silvey
Topics include Assistance Agreements, stewardship contracting, IDIQ contracts

3:45 CCS/CCI: Internal Discussion – Jill Silvey

5:30 PM Social with Partners at Hampton Inn - BYOB, food provided for \$7/each

7:00 Partner presentations of projects and ideas
Wetland Legacy Database – Tom Hinz
National Wild Turkey Federation – Dale Tribby
Others TBA

Thursday March 11th

8:00 Montana Comprehensive State Wildlife Plan - T.O. Smith

8:45 BLM Point Observation Database (POD) - Aly Piowar

9:15 Sage-grouse update & research, West Nile Virus – Dave Naugle, Roxanne Falise

9:45 BREAK

10:00 CCS/CCI: Partners Discussion

10:00 National Wildlife Federation sage-grouse update – Jay Gore

10:15 Other partner update – TBA

10:30 Deputy State Director (Resources) Comments – Howard Lemm

11:00 NFWF: WO liaison, making it work - Jill Silvey, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation representative

WORKING LUNCH - \$5/person Pizza delivery

12:15 Montana Natural Heritage Program update – Sue Crispin

12:30 Montana Natural Heritage Program EO Portal - Allan Cox

1:30-3:00 EO Portal hands-on training Session 1- Allan Cox

3:30-5:00 EO Portal hands-on training Session 2 – Allan Cox

1:30-3:30 Sensitive Species revision breakout groups - Mammals, Fish

3:00-5:00 Sensitive Species revision breakout groups – Birds, Amphibs&Reptiles

Outcome for SS groups – complete final recommendations for list

Friday March 12th

8:00 Macroinvertebrates – Gayle Sitter, Dave Stagliano

Outcome – Decide on follow-up training fieldtrip (next Spring-Summer).

If yes, who? when? where?

9:00 Wetland/Riparian/Botany Discussion

Riparian topics - Mike Philbin

Wetland assessment protocol - Paul Hansen

Wetland assessments - Greg Kudray

Botany topics?

11:00 Hot Topics/Wrap-up

Following meeting, optional fieldtrip to visit Horsethief Hazard Fuels Reduction Project (near Roundup)